

Message Text

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22

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-11 ACDA-05 SSM-03

AF-06 /097 W

----- 069042

R 100944Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 538

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR IS US

SUBJ: NAVON REJECTS MOD ADVISOR'S ALLEGATIONS RE SINAI II

UNDERTAKINGS

REF: TEL AVIV 1065

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED:

BEGIN SUMMARY: YITZHAK NAVON, CHAIRMAN OF THE KNESSET FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE, IN ARTICLE PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN HEBREW AND ENGLISH ON MARCH 6, REFUTED THE ALLEGATIONS MADE BY FORMER MOD ADVISOR YUVAL NEEMAN THAT THE GOI, THROUGH HIS AUGUST 19,1975 TV APPEARANCE, MISLED THE ISRAELI PUBLIC ON THE CONTENTS OF SINAI II. NAVON, COMPARING HIS TV STATEMENTS WITH PUBLICIZED SINAI II TEXTS, SHOWS THAT HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE AGREEMENT WAS ACCURATE AND DEMANDS AN APOLOGY FROM PROFESSOR NEEMAN.

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END SUMMARY.

1. IN AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN HAARETZ AND JERUSALEM POST ON MARCH 6, NAVON REPLIED TO ALLEGATION OF FORMER MOD ADVISOR YUVAL NEEMAN (REFTEL) THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD MISLED THE PUBLIC ON THE CONTENTS OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT. RECALLING THE BACKGROUND TO HIS TV APPEARANCE ON EVE OF SECRETARY'S RETURN TO THE AREA FOR WHAT BECAME CONCLUDING ROUND, NAVON WRITES THAT DURING THE PERIOD OF NEGOTIATIONS THE PUBLIC WAS FILLED WITH "GNAWING DOUBTS AND SUSPICIONS". NAVON ASKED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR PERMISSION TO APPEAR ON TV AND DESCRIBE THE NON-SECRET PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT AND THOSE PROVISIONS ON WHICH THERE WAS A MAXIMUM AGREEMENT. THE PRIME MINISTER AGREED.

2. NAVON GOES ON TO COMPARE IN DETAIL THE PUBLISHED AGREEMENTS WITH HIS TV ANALYSIS, ILLUSTRATING THAT THE TWO ARE VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL. AS FOR THE SECRET PROVISIONS, NAVON INVITES PROFESSOR NEEMAN TO READ THE DOCUMENTS IN THE KNESSET COMMITTEE'S POSSESSION AND TO SEE FOR HIMSELF THAT ALL THE UNDERTAKINGS MENTIONED OR ALLUDED TO ON TV APPEAR IN THE DOCUMENT. AS REGARDS THE POSSIBILITY OF WITHDRAWAL OF THE UNEF FORCES FROM THE REGION, NAVON ADMITS THAT TWO CHANGES OCCURRED BETWEEN HIS TV APPEARANCE AND THE DRAFTING OF THE FINAL DOCUMENT. "FIRST, THIS SUBJECT IS NOT MENTIONED IN THE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN US AND EGYPT THROUGH THE AGENCY OF THE U.S....BUT ONLY IN THE AGREEMENT WHICH ISRAEL HAS DEPOSITED WITH THE USG. SECONDLY, MORE IS SAID HERE BY IMPLICATION THAN IS EXPLICITLY SAID..."

3. NAVON SUMS UP THAT "IF THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND MY PARTY TOOK THEIR STAND ON THE INTERIM AGREEMENT ON THE BASIS OF WHAT I SAID ON TV, THEY WERE NOT MISLED....I THINK THAT PROFESSOR NEEMAN OWES ME AN APOLOGY".

4. JERUSALEM POST TEXT IS BEING POUCHED TO NEA/IAI.

5. DEFMIN PERES, SPEAKING ON PRIME TIME TELEVISION INTERVIEW PROGRAM MARCH 9, SAID THAT IF HE HAD AGREED WITH NEEMAN'S ANALYSIS, HE WOULD HAVE HAD TO RESIGN. PERES REITERATED HIS VIEW THAT ISRAEL HAD DERIVED POSITIVE BENEFITS FROM SINAI II AND HAD MADE THE RIGHT DECISION IN ENTERING INTO THE AGREEMENT. NEEMAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARTICLE, PERES SAID, CONTAINED A NUMBER OF EXAGGERATIONS ARISING FROM HIS VERY HARDLINE POLITICAL PRECONCEPTIONS. PERES DENIED THAT THE GOI HAD MISLED THE ISRAELI PUBLIC ABOUT THE CONTENTS OF SINAI II UNDERTAKINGS ALTHOUGH HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NUMEROUS CHANGES FROM THE INITIAL TO THE FINAL DRAFT. NAVON'S PRESENTATION, PERES ADDED, WAS VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE FINAL DRAFT. PERES FURTHER NOTED THAT NEEMAN'S MAIN OBJECTIONS TO SINAI II CONCERNED THE RETURN OF THE

ABU RODEIS OIL FIELDS. PERES SAID HE TOLD NEEMAN THAT HE DISAGREED WITH HIM AND THAT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES ISRAEL HAD MADE THE RIGHT DECISION ON THE OIL ISSUE AND THAT SATISFACTORY ALTERNATE ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN PROVIDED FOR IN THE AGREEMENT.
END UNCLASSIFIED.

6. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COMMENT. NAVON REBUTTAL HAS ATTRACTED RELATIVELY LITTLE ATTENTION HERE IN PART BECAUSE HAVING SAID SEVERAL WEEKS AGO THAT HE WOULD DO SO, IT WAS NO LONGER A HOT NEWS ITEM. MOREOVER, NEEMAN'S ATTACK HAD BEEN AIMED AGAINST ISRAELI FOREIGN POLICY IN ITS ENTIRETY AND THE NAVON TV APPEARANCE HAD BEEN ONLY AN ILLUSTRATIVE POINT. NAVON'S REPLY, ESSENTIALLY A DEFENSE OF HIS OWN BONA FIDES, THEREFORE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A FULL-FLEDGED REFUTATION OF NEEMAN'S ANALYSIS. NAVON'S ARTICLE UNFORTUNATELY APPEARED ON THE SAME DAY AS MAARIV BEGAN ITS SERIALIZATION OF THE SHEEHAN FOREIGN POLICY ARTICLE ATTACKING US MIDDLE EAST POLICY WHICH INEVITABLY OVERSHADOWED IT. WITH THESE CAVEATS IN MIND, WE BELIEVE THAT NAVON ARTICLE HAS SERVED ITS PURPOSE BY SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC POINTS.
TOON

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